AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A targeted gene delivery method that comprises bringing bispecific ligands having specificity for a mammalian cell surface receptor capable of activating receptor-mediated endocytosis into contact with (a) **intact,** bacterially derived minicells that contain a therapeutic nucleic acid sequence **operably linked to a promoter** and (b) non-phagocytic mammalian cells, such that (i) said bispecific ligands cause said minicells to bind to said mammalian cells and (ii) said minicells are engulfed by said mammalian cells, which produce an expression product of said therapeutic nucleic acid sequence.

2. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said bispecific ligand comprises polypeptide or carbohydrate.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said bispecific ligand comprises a first arm that carries specificity for a bacterially derived minicell surface structure and a second arm that carries specificity for a non-phagocytic mammalian cell surface receptor.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 3, wherein said first arm and said second arm are monospecific.

5. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 3, wherein said first arm and said second arm are multivalent.

6. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 3, wherein said minicell surface structure is an O-polysaccharide component of a lipopolysaccharide on said minicell surface.

7. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 3, wherein said minicell surface structure is a member of the group consisting of outer membrane proteins, pilli, fimbrae, flagella, and cell-surface exposed carbohydrates.

8. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 3, wherein said mammalian cell surface receptor is capable of activating receptor-mediated endocytosis of said minicell.

9. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said bispecific ligand comprises an antibody or antibody fragment.

10. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said bispecific ligand comprises a humanized antibody.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said therapeutic nucleic acid sequence encodes a suicide gene.

13. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said therapeutic nucleic acid encodes a normal counterpart of a gene that expresses a protein that functions abnormally or is present in abnormal levels in said mammalian cells.

14. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian cells are in vitro.

15. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said mammalian cells are in vivo.

16. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 1, wherein said therapeutic nucleic acid is contained on a plasmid comprised of multiple nucleic acid sequences.

17. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 16, wherein said plasmid comprises a regulatory element.

18. (Currently amended) ~~A~~ **The** method according to claim 16, wherein said plasmid comprises a reporter element.

19 to 35. (Cancelled)